**VUSAC Meeting Minutes**

July 13, 2016 at 7:09 PM in the Goldring Student Center

MINUTES

**In Attendance**

**VUSAC**

**Judiciary**

PRESIDENTS: Stuart Norton and Rahul Christofferson

VP EXTERNAL: Stephen Warner

VP INTERNAL: Golda Greenspoon

VP STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS: Hannah Brennen

**Assessor Members**

CAMPUS LIFE COORDINATOR: Emily Gilbert

CHAIR: Saambavi Mano

CHIEF RETURNING OFFICER: Taylor Cenac

FINANCE: Nicole Gumapac

SECRETARY: Artimes Ghahremani

**Commissioners & Councillors**

COMMUTER: Co-Chair Karen Indraatmadja/ Commissionner Position Empty

EQUITY : Co-Chair Zoe Kwan / Commissionner Position Empty

SCARLET AND GOLD: Zahavah Kay

SUSTAINABILITY : Jamil Fiorino-Habib

ARTS AND CULTURE : Olivia Klasios

**COUNCILLORS**

**LEVIES**

**GUESTS**

Stephanie Spagnuolo – UTSU Director

Shannon Brown – VCDS

**Not In Attendance**

**OFFICIAL REGRETS**

ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT : Nina Christianson

COMMUNICATIONS: Shailee Koranne

**ABSENT**

Motion: Olivia moves to approve minutes from last two meetings. Hannah seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Motion: Olivia moves to approve the agenda as it stands with the amendments below. Stuart seconds. Motion passes.

*Addition: Stephanie asks for 2 minutes for her UTSU updates – Stu moves – Zahavah seconds*

*Addition: Hannah 3 minutes for ratifications of new clubs, and 2 minutes for club updates – Olivia seconds*

*Change: Olivia moves up agenda item –Jamil seconds, Olivia abstained, all others in favour*

**EX-OFFICIO REPORTS AND UPDATES**

*UTSU Director – Stephanie*

Stephanie discusses the next UTSU board meeting where the CFS will be giving a presentation. It will be live streamed on Friday, and the link can be obtained from Stephanie. She asks VUSAC if there are any questions they would like for her to bring up. The CFS is the Canadian Federation of Students, and we are Local 98. Steve mentions he has questions that he will ask in person. He thinks that it is important to listen and engage with what they have to say.

Stuart asks if they are keeping their “No Means No” campaign. Stephanie says they are, but a name change is in order.

*CLC* – Emily

The CLC, Emily, is introduced to the group. The council introduces themselves to her.

**ASSESSOR MEMBER REPORTS AND UPDATES**

*Finance –* Nicole

*Semestered Budget System*

Nicole says that in May, she met with Rahul and Stuart to discuss finances and work out the logistics of a semestered budget system. She says that 86% of our spending takes place in the winter, 13% in the fall, and 1% in summer. Despite that, the budget is arbitrarily split between the summer and the school year. Nicole proposes a budget split between the fall and the winter. Through financial analysis, it was found that clubs didn’t submit their receipts until April- this is an accountability issue. Currently, the split stops any executives from contributing to the budgeting process, because by the time they are elected the budgeting process would be almost over. She opens the floor to detailed discussion. The accountant, Hannah, says the split would be a good idea and that it would be feasible. It would also help in supervising clubs and levies.

Shannon asks when the split would be. Nicole aims to put it out in late November/ early December, because its not as big as the year budget, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Hannah asks what to do to hold clubs accountable. Nicole says in that situation, at the very least, if they submit a high request, it can be taken into account. Private meetings will show more on overestimation.

Olivia asks if clubs submitting a second budget later will call for a second budget meeting. Nicole says yes, but they will be shorter, more efficient meetings.

Shannon suggests that it may be useful to reassess and move some money around so that clubs can reach their goals.

Hannah asks if, based on the percentage of spending, there will be a percentage of funding allocated per semester. Nicole says this past year the high spending was because of Highball. Currently, the bursar does 60/30/10% installments. Next year, we expect to follow this and adjust as necessary.

*Printer Policy*

Nicole says that she has discussed this with Stuart. First, there were people printing things like textbooks and other elicit materials. This should not take place in our office. We do not have a concrete policy, so we cannot stop it. She wonders if we should create a policy. Also, she mentions that Shannon saw an increase in printer usage, and prices have remained the same. She recommends they increase the fees from 5 cents for 2x side to 5 cents per side.

Golda thinks it would be a great thing to do, and the policy can go into the eventual office policy document(s).

Emily asks how we would differentiate between academic articles and textbooks. Nicole says it would be ok to print specific articles, but not full textbooks. Also, VUSAC could designate specific hours/advanced notice for large printing jobs.

Hannah suggests imposing a weekly limit on printing (per person), but this may be a bad idea since many assignments can be due in the same week.

Golda says she is working on two different documents, one is internal and the other is external. Printing policy instructions can go in either document.

Jamil asks how to manage what people are printing without an invasion of privacy. Rahul responds that we can ask how much they are printing before they do, and then check up on them if it is suspicious. Emily adds that raising the price will lead to less printing.

*2015-2016 Financial Standing*

Hannah and Nicole have not closed the books due to outstanding issues. Victoria University had cheques that were not cashed in, and this caused a discrepancy. Based on profit and loss statements, VUSAC went in the year with a $20 000 surplus, and ended with an $8000 deficit. However, the bursar is fine with this, because they encouraged spending.

*Submission of Summer Budgets*

An upcoming email from Nicole will ask for budgets. Since the summer is almost over, most of it will be done retroactively. Any expenses can be listed to be entered into the books. The deadline is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Shannon says that budgets need to be in a week before the budget meeting. Saambavi will check on this.

*Revised Incidental Fees for 2016-2017 School Year*

Based on referendum, Nicole says that full time students will be paying $56, part time students $31. Since the last referendum was held in 2007, what we would have right now is $59. There is a gap between where we are now and where we should have been, but we are ok.

Motion: Hannah moves to approve the constitutional amendment to the composition of the budget steering committee, incidental fees, and levy composition. Zahavah seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

*Communications* – no report

*Secretary –* no report

**JUDICIARY REPORTS AND UPDATES**

*President* – Rahul and Stuart

*Discussion of Ramadan Violence in Iraq, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia, combatting Islamophobia*

Rahul says that it has been a tough week in the world. He wants to make Vic a more equitable and inclusive space. Vic being a safe space includes having a place where you can speak about things that are bothering you, a place to heal and share. The last few weeks have seen violence around the world, including that of ISIS, and these things are happening throughout Ramadan. He asks how VUSAC can show solidarity, and what can be done more generally to let people exist, heal, and share. He asks for tangible ideas and thoughts.

Olivia wonders if we will move forward keeping these kinds of discussions a part of meetings beyond the summer. Rahul responds that having these items focuses VUSAC on issues that affect student lives in a way that allow people to discuss what is important to them. Part of having student government is that it allows you to voice your concerns. Olivia thinks that instead of adding time onto meetings that are already at max capacity, it might be more poignant to designate a forum every month to bring up these topics. Summer meetings are a good time, but moving forward a Vic forum is a good idea because VUSAC meetings are not popular to the community.

Stephen mentions caucus in September, an opportunity for the Vic community to submit any agenda item. He encourages anyone who wants to engage in these conversations outside of student politics to submit an item to caucus.

Stuart recenters the discussion on creating safe spaces. Last year, he says a collaboration with the UTSU’s expression against oppression was a good point of reference. He adds the idea of Vic using the Cat’s Eye to create anti-oppression space to share experiences and empower students. It would be important for us to look at doing things like that. Not many groups at Vic represent marginalized people. Stuart says we have the resources, and it is time to follow through.

Olivia agrees with Stephen, but opening up a space for people to come and share should be something non-obligatory.

Zahavah sees a physical space full of people to discuss these issues as a way to combat Islamophobia, amongst other things. It shows the level of support our community offers.

Nicole says that when you identify as part as a marginalized group, seeing struggle in the media takes an emotional toll. Collective trauma is experienced. These things are systemic, we can’t tear them down, but Nicole encourages everyone that when these events happen, and people are affected, give them an outlet and check up on them. Take the individual initiative.

Stephanie agrees with Stuart and Nicole, and encourages VUSAC to continue to do this. Stephanie asks whether Vic has a prayer space, and if not, to designate a prayer space.

Rahul responds that this is a cool idea, and that it can be discussed with the Dean’s Office.

Rahul adds that he has a vision of what might be a nice response, along the lines of expression against oppression. Rahul says that caucus and VUSAC are good ideas, but not the best – oppressed groups would want to talk to a student collective that can empathize through experience. This is similar to the UTSU equity \_\_\_\_\_, in which racialized students were called together, shared experiences and were able to talk. There is an important individual aspect. Having a forum to voice anger and pain with response is a way to know that others have your back. He asks for tangible ideas and steps to take moving forward in creating something successful, attended, and comforting.

Olivia adds that the exercise room downstairs may be a good space for the prayer room. [Olivia leaves the meeting].

Hannah says we can reach out to groups around U of T, and offer our space for events such as XAO. After what happened last year, there may be hesitancy reaching out to Vic. VUSAC should offer support for student groups catering to racialized, marginalized students.

Jamil thinks a physical space is the most important thing, or the potential of an online forum. Personally, he does not think VUSAC is the best, because it is not a good, welcoming environment. People have an envisioned perspective of what the Cat’s Eye is as well. There is unclaimed space in the Goldring Centre that we can start to use. Potentially, the commuter lounge space can be revamped into a hosting space for events. [Hannah leaves]. Jamil wonders what people think the biggest medium is in which Islamophobia is perpetuated. VUSAC could take an analytical approach, as the things we hear are filtered by rhetoric and ideology – or be more sensitive and emotional. Perhaps strike a balance.

*Discussion of combatting anti-black violence and community struggles*

Rahul says the introduction is the same, we have not and do not present opportunities for students to feel safe as part of a community. We have not done more than a few posts online, but it is not enough. He is looking for things we can do.

Zahavah says that we are dealing with the wake of traumatic incidents where a space would be beneficial. She wonders if Rahul is thinking more about what to do in the wake of trauma or as a permanent body. Rahul responds that he wants both. For a specific response [Hannah enters], how can we reach out to groups that are providing safe spaces/ events for black students, v. organizing things at Vic? As a more general thing, he encourages a discussion of how to create permanent spaces at Vic for these situations.

Stephanie says that it might be a good idea for VUSAC to do something similar to the UTSU and the UTSU’s racialized students’ collective, maybe open up the back meeting room occasionally for students as a safe space.

Taylor says that her biggest concern is for VUSAC to start something and be passionate, and that it will fade off into everyone’s busy schedules. A great idea should continue. She asks to keep that in mind, as it would be sad if we started something and it drifted off. Stephanie responds that this is a fair point, but we can not judge that unless we try it first. If it becomes a problem, it can be discussed beforehand. Things happen regularly that are sad, and people need space to be sad in.

Motion: Rahul moves to strike an ad-hoc committee for investigation into the formation of a VUSAC racialized students collective. Golda seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Emily asks if we decide to do a prayer room, do people feel comfortable with the space doubling as a safe space? There has been talk in the Dean’s Office of a meditation room, so this is feasible. Students need a space that is not the Cat’s Eye. Having a space is important, and so is finding a space that can be used for different things at different times. Rahul responds, without personal expertise, that there should be something more permanent. It is so individuals can have a space for themselves at any time. If there is a prayer related event, they might be able to book the space. There are examples at U of T that we can model them off of.

Karen agrees, and mentions the multi-faith centre, which sometimes has mats set out. It would be good to include a meditation space for any religion.

Stuart adds that Emmanuel college may have multi-faith space, which would be a good space for consultation.

Jamil adds that once we decide on a space, we need to have someone who manages that space in the same way the Cat’s Eye is managed.

Stephanie says that the multifaith space and racialized discussion space should be separate. She is unsure if she would feel comfortable being in the same space for peace and for agitation.

Karen responds that the exercise room is too small, and it is beside the kitchen, which is not maintained throughout the year. This may not be appropriate for a sacred space.

Rahul responds that we can collaborate with Emmanuel College. Also, the exercise room is not ventilated, so VUSAC should look into spaces for a permanent set up which we can advertise. He agrees with Jamil on the accountability and says that until we have a permanent set up, Stuart and Rahul will be accountable.

Hannah adds that the exercise room is not particularly private, and it should be private so people can go to have time to themselves.

Nicole asks what the Vic Chapel is used for. Stuart says that events Victoria runs it and rents it out, but there are several chapels in Emmanuel.

Zahavah says we should be reaching out to members of the community who pray, as there are different necessities to prayer. Emily adds that there are many considerations to take into account.

*Steps to be taken as a council in the absence of Vic Pride*

Rahul mentions that there is still no Vic pride exec, one thing we should do is advertise this as much as possible. Beyond this, if they were to dissolve, we would have to do something as a council. He opens the discussion.

Hannah says that in addition to salvaging Vic Pride, no matter what it would be worth reaching out to LGBTout, seeing some representation at Vic, and having them attached to the greater U of T community. She discourages an open discussion with few students, as it would be nice to have a better established group. This year, Vic Pride is redeveloping as it is not very well established in the Vic community, but this is an opportunity to make that happen.

Karen asks for clarification on the Vic Pride situation. Hannah responds that all Vic Pride executives have graduated, and the positions had no interest, thus there are no incoming exec. That may be resolved, as there is now a levy head. However, Vic Pride has no MO, and is starting from scratch. There is an opportunity to make it great.

Karen asks if it is possible to include Vic Pride in orientation advertising. Hannah says it will be done at the clubs fair and queer orientation to get interest from first years who will be present for the next 4 years [Golda exits].

Rahul asks Stephen if he has reached out to UTSU and ASSU. He says yes, but he did not reach out to LGBT out. He asks what we can do to get more collaboration. [Golda enters] Rahul asks if we don’t get enough interest for a club, what people think about incorporating Vic Pride operations into VUSAC either through equity or as a semi-autonomous levy.

Hannah clarifies that if it would be more similar to how VOCA operates.

Stu says we should figure out a way to assist, but they are still collecting fees from Vic Students, so maybe there should be a referendum before VUSAC absorbs them. Rahul responds that if we can find a way around having members of VUSAC running a levy, having members operate it as executive or as a support staff. Hannah responds that as per the constitution, you are not allowed to be a levy head and VUSAC member, but you can be an executive.

Nicole says that because it is a levy, they are supposed to have financial autonomy, but there is no accountability mechanism currently outlined. Even if we did dissolve them, its unclear how long they haven’t been operating at their best, but they have been collecting $700 a year anyway. Where is money from previous years going? Shannon responds that the money is in their bank account.

Stephanie says that Vic Pride’s presence during rainbow sprinkles at frosh will be a good way to relay information and get frosh to join.

Jamil says that it might be best that we assist pride in getting on its feet, as VUSAC will have a lot to do during the year. Another benefit is that it gets people involved in talking about these issues. VUSAC should allow other people to flourish and come up with good ideas. If anything, we can assist in advertising.

*General Updates*

Rahul starts with the indigenous studies course requirement. They set up a meeting in preparation to reach out for next steps. Stuart has been in contact with a professor in the aboriginal studies department, and set up a meeting. They are trying to get an idea of her thoughts, any options or steps. They are also reaching out to the First Nations House about where can we take this and how.

Stuart discusses the SGRT and the Governing Council policy on Open, Accessible and Democratic Autonomous Student Organizations. Essentially, the aim is to make sure student organizations that are non-federated are both functioning and accessible. ​Consultation has occurred in the past, and good feedback came from consultation​.

​Members from UTMSU and SCSU​ had issues with student organization autonomy and new relations with administration proposed in the policy​. Stephen made a post in our Facebook group ​reaching out to get consensus from VUSAC members. Because the SGRT was looking at drafting a letter showing support for the policy as it had been drafted with heavy consultation from student societies​, Stuart and Rahul were approached to sign it. If you saw the letter, they wanted to make sure they were on the same page as council, and there was miscommunication between VUSAC and the SGRT on the due date. The policy passed, but it does not directly affect VUSAC. Because VUSAC is a part of Victoria University, we do not apply directly ​to this​ Governing Council policy. Stephen spoke at the hearing, and we are not the only society that didn’t sign the letter. The policy was ultimately passed and approved by Governing Council.

*Vice President External* – no report

*Vice President Student Operations* – Hannah

Motion: Hannah moves to omnibus the ratification of Vic Dumbledore’s Army and Victoria Student Ambassadors. Stuart seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Motion: Hannah moves to ratify Vic Dumbledore’s Army and Victoria Student Ambassadors. Jamil seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

**Victoria Student Ambassadors:** The Victoria Student Ambassadors is a group of students that work closely with the Alumni Office to maintain ties between the current and former students of Victoria. As ambassadors of the college, we are involved in many diverse activities. These include attending various alumni events, volunteering activities and on campus programs. We are always looking for new members, so come on out!

**Vic Dumbledore's Army:** We, the members of Dumbledore's Army, endeavour to put our love for the Harry Potter series and literacy in general to good use in both the casual enjoyment of the books and movies, and in making a positive contribution to our community through charity work specifically directed towards children receiving the education they deserve.

*Clubs Fair Update*

Hannah says that there has been interest from student groups outside VIC, which is good for a broader view of the community. Also, she is reviewing the assessor club structure. There will be many non-Vic groups as well as Vic groups at the clubs fair. If you know of a group who wants Vic populous, reach out to Hannah.

*Vice President Internal –* no report

**COMMISSION REPORTS AND UPDATES**

*Commuter* – Karen

Karen introduces the new VOCA executive team. There were 16 applicants, and she interviewed them all in July. They went well, and she thanks everyone for the like thread and approach.

Motion: Rahul moves to ratify Diva Fanian, James Mangaliman, Jacqueline Gri, Hannah Green, Gabriel Calderon, Divna Stojanovic, Saif Zaman, Jinisha Panjwani, Kamna Gandhi, and Diana Von Schwerin as the 2016/17 VOCA exec. Hannah seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

*Academic and Professional Development* – no report

*Scarlet and Gold* – no report

*Sustainability* – no report

*Equity –* no report

*Arts and Culture –* Olivia

Olivia provides some general updates on the Arts and Culture commission. She is meeting with Blair and Serena, the BOB directors, to figure out the budget and direction of the BOB. She is working to keep the Cat’s Eye concerts going, and has contacted the AGO and ROM for ticket packages for Friday Night Live and AGO Thursday - one for each semester to pre-purchase and sell out of VUSAC. She suggests potentially subsidizing them or getting a group rate to make them more accessible.

Stuart asks about the performing arts endowment; Olivia responds that she is looking into it. She adds that she will meet with Zahavah to discuss the change in time of Gardiner Gala (which is no longer at Winter fest).

**COUNCILOR REPORTS**

None

Motion: Stuart moves to adjourn meeting. Zahavah seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Meeting is adjourned.